

# ***SAFELY HOME, FAMILIES FIRST***

## **Regional Service Council Minutes**

### **Region #16 Meeting**

**Date:** February 24, 2011

**Time:** 5:00 p.m.

**Location of Meeting:** Haub's Steak Haus, Haubstadt, Indiana

**Meeting Chair:** Regional Manager Virginia Combs

**Meeting Secretary:** LaJean Gentry

**Call to Order:** Start Time 5:00 p.m. CST

**Roll Call:** Quorum – 11 of 14 Voting Members Present

#### **Voting Members Present**

Virginia Combs  
Judge Bob Aylsworth  
Susan Blackburn  
Larry Marchino  
Judith Harper  
Lyla Theriac  
Sebrina Martin  
Judge Timothy Crowley (Proxy for Judge Brett Niemeier)  
Michael Summers  
Stephanie Repphan  
Steve Cunningham (Proxy for Judge Joseph Verkamp)

#### **Phone Present**

None

#### **Absent with Regret**

Judge Brett Niemeier  
Judge Joseph Verkamp  
Lynn Kyle

#### **Absent**

Judge Jeffrey Biesterveld  
Judge Jeffrey Meade  
Judge David O. Kelley  
Judge Keith A. Meier  
Judge James Redwine  
Parker Trulock  
Jo Ann Krantz  
Darrin McDonald  
Doug Brown  
Bill Curtis  
Barb Tilly (CFS)  
Rachelle Froeschke  
Michael Parker  
Bonnie Rinks (SW Behav. Hlth.)  
Nicole Schultz  
Shaye Isaacs  
Wendy Griffin-Allen  
T. Lynne Rump  
Henry Cruz  
Lisa Harris  
Kent Houchins  
Molly Coulston  
Lynn Kyle  
Ann Hecht (Raintree)  
Suzanne Draper  
Jackie Foley  
Johnene Presley-Wheat  
John Browning (SW Behav. Health)  
Keith Lindsey (Raintree)  
T. J. Brink  
Chris Hoehn

#### **Others in Attendance**

Jan Dotson (DCS)  
Dr. John Ireland (Ireland)  
Dr. Donna Culley (SW Behav. Hlth.)  
Jara Dillingham (Villages)  
Natalie Kassenbrock (Ireland)  
Sidney Hardgrave (Holly's House)  
Darcy Durbin  
Mike Singleton (Ireland)  
John Schroder (DCS Reg. 16 RFM)  
Dr. Barbara Jessen (UMYH)  
Nick Miller (Ireland)  
Matthew Bigler (Warrick Co. Pros.)  
Lynne Wisneski (Resolute)  
Terrie Decker (CFS)  
Lori McIntire  
Laura Wathen (Youth First)  
Shirley Starks

#### **Others in Attendance**

Karen Miller (Debra Corn)  
Cynthia Smith  
Rick Humbarger (Lifeline)  
Emily Heineke  
Mike Jones (DOULOS)  
Kim Bivens (Raintree)  
Norm Smith (Wernle)  
Melanie Doty  
Alyssa Feldhaus (Villages Intern)  
Berniece Tirmenstien  
Lynn Hert (Deaconess)  
Amanda Schoeck (Deaconess)  
Julie Canaan  
Elizabeth Pendley (Vin. YMCA)  
Tanya Bezy  
Candice Perry (Albion Fellows BC)

## **Approval of minutes from last meeting on October 28, 2010:**

As read   X  

As corrected       

Gini welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked them to introduce themselves. Minutes of the October 28, 2010 RSC meeting had previously been e-mailed. Judge Robert Aylsworth made motion to approve the Minutes. Judith A. Harper seconded that motion. Minutes of the October 28, 2010 meeting were approved by unanimous vote of the 11 voting members present.

## **Program/Committee Reports**

**Community Partners Report** –Natalie Kassenbrock and Mike Singleton. Gini noted the Community Partners administrators were present and were going to discuss their programs as well as other prevention programs in our region. Prevention programs are separate from service programs, as service programs are programs provided to probation children and DCS wards after they have come into our system. Gini noted our Community Partners program is doing a great job of keeping kids from coming into the system and that is their goal. To accomplish this, each region is allotted a certain amount of money. In the past the amount of money received by each region was based on expenditures from previous years. As a result of the fact that some regions pursue funding and service programs and are maybe more creative about service programs, some smaller regions have more funding than some larger regions. Indianapolis recently took a look at that funding as Regional Managers were asked to make recommendations to Central Office as to how that issue could be resolved. Gini reported she had served on a committee that reviewed this concept and the committee made the recommendation to Central Office that the funding for each region be based on the number of children under 18 in that region. As a result, there is a huge disparity between what some regions received in the past and what they will receive, it was recommended to Central Office that the amount be reduced over a two year period and not a one year period. Central Office agreed to this request. Region 16 will see a small reduction over the next two years.

Gini turned the meeting over to Natalie Kassenbrock and Mike Singleton to discuss prevention funding, noting that Ireland Home Based Services is our Community Partners administrator with prevention service providers being under their umbrella.

Natalie first gave a program report: There are presently 101 open cases, with 49 referrals in January—6 from Gibson Co., 9 from Knox Co., 3 from Pike Co., 1 from Posey Co., 25 from Vanderburgh Co., and 5 from Warrick Co. Natalie noted these reports are posted on Ireland's website. There were 49 cases closed out in January with 93% having met at least one goal.

January's budget report ended at \$42,357.25 with an increase in use of flex funds. The flex funds increase was due to things such as families' electricity getting shut off during the winter and emergency food.

Several agencies have requested additional prevention funds:

1. Knox County Child Abuse Prevention Council, Inc., is planning an event on April 7 as April is Child Abuse Prevention month. They are working with the Knox County Library to hold the event. Holly Schlaak, who wrote the book Invisible Kids, will be there during the day to give a presentation to local professionals. Invitations will be sent but anyone from the region is welcome to attend. The event will be open to the community in the evening. Information will be provided to give parents the tools they need to prevent child abuse and hopefully touch the prevention

piece. Holly will also give a presentation to the parents present in the evening. The children will be taken to the Knox County Library for activities so the parents can listen to Holly's presentation. Each child will go home with a picture as a photographer will be present to take pictures of either the child or the child and family, and these will be developed while Holly speaks. They have requested \$3500. They have received a lot of support from the community in the form of time or gift certificates to get the parents there so they can receive the information.

2. Lynn Hert with Deaconess Family Medical Residency reported their clinic provides health care for low income families and has approximately 100 to 120 visits per day with 87% of their clients being on Indiana Medicaid. They have been providing parenting classes for a long time. They do provide child care three days a week and try to schedule parenting classes during that time. They also provide transportation through Unity Taxi at a flat rate for clients who need transportation. They do provide incentives of about \$5 an hour per class if the client actually participates and completes all of the sessions. In addition to parenting classes, other classes include parenting toddlers, parenting a sick child, parenting an ADHD child, and parenting teenagers. Deaconess also has classes based on the needs of the parent, such as anger management, financial management and stress management. They have developed a new mom's support group which has grown so large that it has been divided. Most recently, they started a domestic violence support group for moms and collaborate with Albion Fellows for that. They are requesting \$1300 to be able to provide additional classes.
3. Candice Perry with Albion Fellows reported they are a domestic violence and sexual assault center and have a safe shelter. They also have different programs that they take out to the community, and prevention services is a big part of what they do on both an individual and group basis. They do this by communicating with youth in the community and community partners. On an individual basis they work in case management with women and children in the shelter by providing for their immediate, post shelter and post crisis needs. They are requesting \$3000 as they have seen an increase in every single program.
4. Laura Wathen with Youth First reported they provide prevention programs for families by strengthening families, parents and caregivers for youth 6 to 9 and 10 to 14. Their program includes family dinner, transportation, babysitting and a 9 to 10 week curriculum. Parents attend sessions and come back together for a family session. They also have a skills for life program, a prevention program in which they teach high school students to mentor fourth grade students. They are requesting \$9,710 in funding.
5. Natalie reported the YWCA of Evansville submitted a request for \$10,000 in funding for a program for domestic violence services, which provides emergency shelter to case management services.
6. Natalie also reported the Winslow Elementary School has requested \$1,200 for a summer reading program at their school library in June. The school developed the summer reading program to give students an outlet and safe haven during the summer.

These requests total \$32,533.58 in funding. Subtracting that amount from the \$76,669.17 in unused funds leaves a total of \$44,135.59. After subtraction of administrative costs of \$2,440.02, that leaves \$41,695.57 in additional funds available. These funds must be expended by 06-30-11.

Gini first entertained a motion to approve the proposals as presented this evening. Larry Marchino made motion to approve and Lyla Theriac seconded that motion. In discussion, Judge Aylsworth

noted that since Natalie presented for agencies that were not present that there were no problems with any of the requests. Natalie noted they were very familiar with the providers and the services offered by the providers. Gini said a majority of requests were received from current providers to expand their programs. The process used by Ireland was checking with all of the providers to see if they anticipated expending all of their funding by the end of the year, and if not, if it was okay to put that funding back into the pot for others to use. The second part was that Natalie spoke with all of the current providers to see if they needed additional funding. There was also one request from a new service provider, Child Abuse Prevention Council. The motion was approved by unanimous vote of the 11 voting members present.

Gini noted that in the past we have agreed to allot additional funding to our Community Partners program to make sure we can serve more clients rather than have clients on a waiting list. Gini asked if there were any other suggestions for using the remaining prevention funds available of \$41,695.57. Hearing no suggestions, Gini entertained the motion that the \$41,695.57 go to the Community Partners program with the understanding that if they find an already established program needs additional funding that the money go there. Susan Blackburn made motion to approve. Judy Harper seconded that motion. Judge Aylsworth inquired if this was the same process as last year, and Gini responded that it was. The motion was approved by unanimous vote of the 11 voting members present.

Gini noted that for 2009 to June, 2011 we have received \$874,707 for Community Partners. Over the next two years we will receive \$852,127, which is somewhat of a decrease but not as much as some regions throughout the state.

## **Region 16 Practice Indicators**

Data Lead--Gini mentioned briefly that one of the e-mail attachments was a packet of information identified as a Quarterly Practice Measure Data Analysis. This report indicates how Region 16 is doing in the various areas listed on the front compared to how we were doing at the beginning of last year and gives us a good trending picture. It shows we are doing well in some areas, holding our own in some areas, and not so well in others. These reports are used through the state to gauge where we need to improve. Gini noted she was proud to say that we are doing really well compared to many regions in the state. She also reported we are competing against ourselves and trying to do better than we did the last time. Gini asked that if any had questions about this report to please get with her after the meeting.

## **Practice Update** – Steve Cunningham

Steve noted we talk a lot about the Practice Model at each of these meetings and of course the CFTM process and the skills that go into that are a big part of that process. He noted one of the things Region 16 is constantly doing is trying to improve that process of FCM's meeting with families and how to better serve the families and the people on their teams. Steve reported Region 16 has eight peer coaches who continue to train new staff. When a FCM returns to the office after training they are assigned to a peer coach who teaches them the CFTM process and follows up in the field with the FCM. Vanderburgh County has three peer coaches and because of the size of the county, they are in need of more people. It is hoped to identify more peer coaches as it is a strenuous job in addition to the caseload. Peer coach meetings are held quarterly with a peer coach consultant from Indianapolis. A quarterly meeting was held this date in which it was decided that trainings will now be going back to the basics as to how to facilitate and work with families to refresh and enhance those skills. Steve noted that forms authorization and meeting notes are an important part of the paper record of CFTM's

and the state is revising these forms to make them more user friendly and to include more information in the process.

**Fatherhood Initiative**--Nick Miller. Nick provided information regarding efforts to engage fathers in the region who have children involved in open cases. Since the beginning of the program in March of 2010 they have received 109 referrals from the six counties. Of those fathers, 47 have been located, 37 have been engaged in services, and facilitation of visitation between fathers and children has occurred with 24. Vanderburgh County has referred 68 fathers, Warrick has referred 17, Knox has referred 14, Gibson has referred 5, and Posey has referred 5. Benefits show that there are six cases where the children have been reunified with their fathers. There are two cases where children were placed with paternal relatives and came into contact with these relatives via the referral of the father to the program. Nick is preparing a monthly statistical report that shows the benefits of the program and how they have been able to change children's lives. The objective is to work collaboratively with the DCS offices in the region and determine which fathers can benefit from this assistance and attention. Nick noted referrals have been steady and that the FCM's and supervisors have done a good job of covering candidates in order to continue to reach as many as possible.

### **Regional Foster Care -** Susan Blackburn

Susan reported that a year ago the state established a system of having regional foster care specialists in each region. Region 16 currently has five who are responsible for helping train, license and support the foster homes in the region. The FC specialists have also been very busy licensing relative homes. Relatives are not required to be licensed but to receive a per diem for the relative children placed with them they must complete the licensing process. Region 16 will soon have a sixth foster care specialist to help with those duties. Susan also noted that all foster care specialists have been trained in the last year as foster parent trainers. Foster parents currently must complete 20 hours of pre-service training.

The first foster parent support group meeting was held last week in Vanderburgh County. Next month's meeting will be held in Knox County so that there will be meetings in both the northern and southern parts of the region on alternating months. This will allow foster parents to choose to attend meetings which are convenient for them. The FC Specialists are involved and facilitate the meetings.

New foster homes and relative homes continue to be licensed each month. There are also a few who drop out of the program. The numbers of foster homes have increased but not dramatically.

### **Unfinished Business**

#### **Budget Report** --John Schroder

John reported there have been some shortages for the budget and he is working with the counties to determine how to manage costs. John noted the state is planning to have training sessions concerning the billing process and to answer questions from providers and vendors regarding the billing process. Also, FCM's and other staff will also be trained, discussing such things as referrals which must be completed before payment can be made to vendors. In Region 16 these trainings will occur in April at the Vanderburgh County DCS office.

Dr. Ireland inquired whether Indianapolis was aware of the things that occur in this part of the state relating to the record number of meth busts and how those issues affect the budget. John noted that would be something good to present to DCS Fiscal. He related that this year's budgets were based on

last year's expenditures. John was asked if the regions were on target for spending. John noted Region 16 is on target to overspend by about two million dollars when taking into consideration current figures. The state considers not only the expenditures but the contracts and considers the money set aside for each contract as expended funding. The Auditor of the State made no bill payments during a three day session because DCS had met its limit at that time and those contracted monies were included as expenditures.

Gini noted that John is presenting the directors and Gini with budget and expenditure reports to help ascertain where the funding is going, and the directors and supervisors are working diligently to look at expenditures with families to ensure there is no duplication of services and to also make sure that counties are using Medicaid providers. Counties have been working with and using the mental health centers through the Medicaid Rehab Option program. We are also trying to increase IV E-FC and child support reimbursements for children in our care which will have a positive impact on the budget.

Mike Jones from Doulos asked John if dates had been set for the fiscal training in April. Training will be held on April 14 and 15 at the Vanderburgh County DCS office. The morning sessions will be for county staff and the afternoon sessions will be for vendors and providers.

#### **Judges' Updates** – Judge Robert Aylsworth and Judge Timothy Crowley

Judge Aylsworth said he was hoping not to be laid off July 1 and thinks the state is still in a settling position. He said he had a meeting the next day at the Judicial Center to work on voluntary and involuntary terminations. They are getting forms to the Judges to use on CHINS and other matters so as not to lose IV E funding. The basic forms are substantially done and are on line and in the Judges' hands so that all are able to put the correct statutes in the various sections. Judge Aylsworth is unsure of what will come out of the current legislature.

Judge Crowley gave a perspective of how things were going in Knox County and Vincennes. He related the CHINS numbers are significantly high. In the year 2000 there were 20 CHINS cases and in the year 2010 there were 200 CHINS cases. He noted the courts were not exactly set up to reflect these ebs and flows in cases and this has affected attorneys in trying to set dates, as well as his staff. Judge Crowley reported he had had the same four girls working in his office for the last 13 years and in the last seven months had lost three of them. One lady had worked for eight years as his private secretary when he was an attorney and 14 years as a court reporter. She took a job in another court making the same amount of money because she said it would be less stressful. Another court reporter gave notice on Tuesday. This year so far they have 42 CHINS cases in Knox which puts them on track for 240 to 250 cases this year. Judicial institutions are not set up to deal with these numbers.

Gini noted Knox and Vanderburgh Counties have both exploded with cases. In the past Vanderburgh never had over 450 cases, but now has 730 CHINS wards alone. Laws do change, which causes some impact but not that much of an impact. Gini noted how appreciative she was of the service providers in Region 16 who help us as we too have ebs and flows with staff and are working hard to bring in additional qualified staff. Cynthia Smith asked why there had been such an increase in Knox County. Judge Crowley said that lots of things contributed to the increase such as unemployment and poverty due to factories leaving the area, as well as the meth problem in Knox County which is a rural, farming area. A lot of what is happening is driven by the methamphetamine problem. Judge Crowley noted that sometimes four or five CHINS cases can come out of the same incident. He stated unique issues are involved in that by the time the Prosecutor files charges, several hearings on the CHINS case may have occurred and the family is receiving services and sometimes the children have been

returned to the home, but the parents may go to trial with the Prosecutor trying to send the parents to prison. Gini said that was a good point that the influx of workload and caseload has had an overwhelming, negative impact on institutions such as the Courts, Prosecutor, Probation, and DCS, and that the money is not there to accommodate this rise.

## **New Business**

### **Region 16 Service Proposals**

Gini noted it is time to again approve the proposals for services for the next two years. At our last meeting in October DCS was preparing to post on its website the Requests for Proposals for general services for CHINS and delinquents. Thousands of proposals were received for the state. An e-mail attachment listed all of the service providers who submitted proposals for Region 16 as well as the services they propose to provide. Part of the requirement was that each service provider had to submit several components for the same service. As an example, under domestic violence providers had to submit proposals and costs for participation in Child and Family Team Meetings, participation in court, participation in groups and interpreter services. The chart also indicated which service providers and services the county directors are recommending for service provision in Region 16.

Darcy Durbin, Regional Services Coordinator, asked if anyone had questions about service standards or components. She noted that not every service standard was chosen as a necessary service for this region. For example, Region 16 has FC Specialists who can take care of licensing and updates for the region's foster homes. The approval process for service providers is supposed to be completed by February 28. All documents will be submitted to Central Office by March 30. By May 1<sup>st</sup> it is hoped to have contracts in place and for service providers to submit them back to Central Office by May 15 so that services can start July 1. The exception to this is Homebuilders which begins April 1.

Gini reported that a few years ago each region was asked to take a look at participating in Homebuilders services. It is a model that basically addresses families in their homes and provides intensive services for six to eight weeks to try to keep kids in their homes and move the family to the point that it is safe for the children to stay. At that time Region 16 looked at the service and cost and decided we already have service providers providing those services at a lower rate and chose not to pursue the Homebuilders model. Since that time the State of Indiana has looked at the Homebuilders model again and is requiring all regions to use this service. Ireland provided a proposal as they have staff trained using that model. Each region is to expend a specific amount of money in that particular service. One of the e-mail attachments provided information about the Homebuilders model. Gini noted the region had to look at the provider proposals, make a decision and vote as to whether they wanted the Homebuilders service provider for the region. This was done and Ireland was approved. Contracts are being developed and will begin April 1 statewide. Each county in the region has a minimum number of families to refer to the program. Theoretically, the goal is to provide this service and prevent children from being removed from the home so that foster care costs will decrease. This will in turn balance what we are spending on the Homebuilders program.

Gini noted she would ask for a motion to approve the recommended services. Discussion was then held regarding a discrepancy in the proposed rate and standard rate for services provided by The Villages, which had been resubmitted February 1. Darcy responded that the figures on the spreadsheet were not current and Gini noted that The Villages services were accepted as they had agreed to come down to the standard rate. Gini related that with budget difficulties currently being experienced we cannot afford to go with providers whose rates are above the standard rates. Gini asked for a motion to approve the directors' recommendations for service providers and services for Region 16 for the

next two years. Judy made motion and Susan Blackburn seconded that motion. There was some discussion regarding providers and Gini noted most of the providers are providers we have been worked with in the past and there are very few new providers. Jara asked if one county chose a provider for services and another county later finds they want to use that provider service as well, if that could be done. Gini noted it was acceptable. Gini reported the process is cumbersome and Central Office has been asked to revise the process. The motion was approved by unanimous vote of the 11 voting members present. Darcy will complete the paperwork to send to Indianapolis so that contracts can be prepared and sent to the providers for services to begin 7-1-11.

Gini reported that as a statewide agency DCS realizes we have turned into a giant foster care system. Current literature suggests that sometimes we do more damage to children by removing them from their home or relatives, but that is not the case with all children as some have to be removed to be safe. In some situations, however, we might be able to prevent removal if staff is given tools to do that. The Homebuilders program is one of those tools which will be implemented to provide intensive services immediately at the time of DCS involvement. Another tool is Five Protective Factors training, a training required for all staff through the state based on the premise of five factors that can predict whether a parent will be able to keep a child safe. This includes things such as: Are the parents nurturing and are there signs the children have been nurtured or bonded? Are the parents understanding of the developmental stage where the child should be or do they have higher expectations of the child than they should have? Do the parents have problem solving skills, supports and use the supports or are they aware of supports in the community available to them? Staff will be using those factors to determine if children are safe in the home with their parents or relatives and will be using when talking with providers, courts, CASA's and families during CFTM's.

### **DCS 2011 Goal: Safely Home, Families First**

Gini related our 2011 goal is Safely Home, Families First. We will be trying to increase the number of relative homes and children placed in relative homes and their own homes and decrease the numbers of children placed in foster care. However, there will always be a need for foster care as some children have no relatives appropriate for placement. We will also be looking at kinship homes, which could be a neighbor who has established a great relationship with the family and might be willing to take the children without additional funding. If the Judge orders DCS to place children with a non-relative, we can do that. Gini noted DCS is looking at this process to see if there are ways to work with our policies and practices to recommend that the courts place children in kinship homes, which are not necessarily blood relatives.

Gini noted that service providers, Judges and CASA's would soon be receiving a letter from Judge Payne regarding this initiative. It was asked if this was a statewide initiative and Gini stated yes, it was for all regions in the state.

### **Miscellaneous --**

Gini commended everyone for their continued support and hard work.

### **Public Testimony/Announcement**

None noted.

**Next Meeting Date, Location and Time:** April 28, 2011 at 5:00 p.m. CST at Haub's Steak House, Haubstadt, IN.



Signatures:

Secretary \_\_\_\_\_

Chair \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ (Secretary's initials) Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Regional Service Council    Region 16 Motion Chart**  
**Date: February 24, 2011**  
**Chair: Regional Manager Virginia Combs**

Motion	Discussion	Action	Person Responsible
1. Motion to approve the minutes from the October 28, 2010 meeting.		Adopted – Approved by the 11 voting members present	Motion by Judge Robert Aylsworth to approve Seconded by Judith A. Harper All voting members approved
2. Motion to approve funding for prevention program proposals for 01/1/11 through 06/30/11.	Discussion regarding agencies requesting additional funding. All but one agency are agencies worked with in the past.	Adopted—Approved by the 11 voting members present	Motion by Larry Marchino to approve Seconded by Lyla Theriac All voting members approved
3. Motion that remaining \$41,695.57 in funds go to Community Partners.	Discussion regarding whether this was the same process used as last year and it is.	Adopted—Approved by the 11 voting members present.	Motion by Susan Blackburn to approve Seconded by Judy Harper All voting members approved
4. Motion to approve the Directors' recommendations for services and service providers.	Discussion regarding providers and counties being able to use providers later if they find they have a need for a particular service. Most providers are ones used in the past with few new providers and services can be accessed later if a need is found.	Adopted—Approved by the 11 voting members present	Motion by Judy Harper to approve Seconded by Susan Blackburn All voting members approved

Vote count must be recorded in the minutes.